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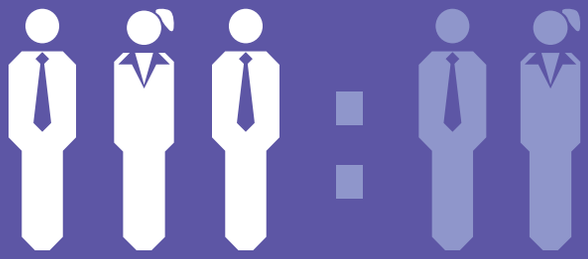

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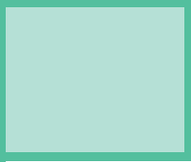

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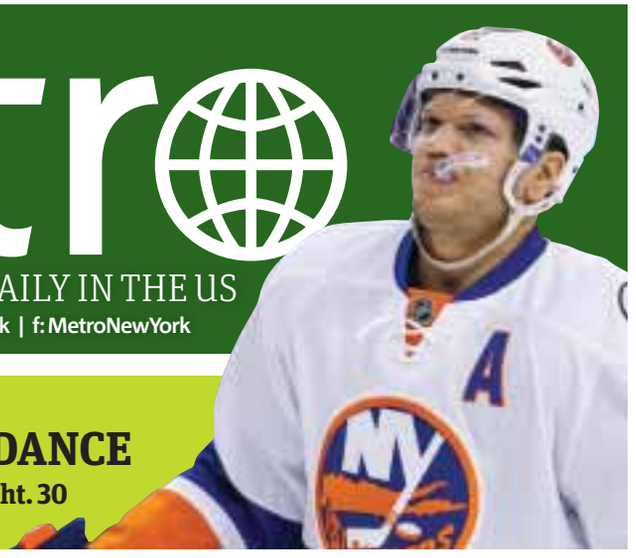

ISLANDERS READY TO DANCE

Isles face Panthers in Game 1 tonight. 30

Verizon workers strike along East Coast. 4

Roz Chast satirizes NYC one cartoon at a time. 27

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SWIPE IT WHILE IT'S HOT

The MTA said it plans to begin phasing out MetroCards starting in June 2018. 2

ISTOCK

3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

LOUISIANA GOV. SIGNS ORDER PROTECTING LGBT RIGHTS

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards on Wednesday signed an executive order providing protections for state employees and employees of state contractors against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and other criteria. There is no state law protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people from employment discrimination, the governor's office said in a statement. REUTERS

SANDERS RALLY DRAWS THOUSANDS IN NYC PARK

2 Bernie Sanders joined a number of other speakers and performers at a large campaign rally in Washington Square Park Wednesday night. The park's name was trending on Twitter at the height of the rally around 8:30 p.m., as Sanders touched on many now familiar issues: wealth inequality, expanding social security and establishing a $15 minimum wage. The senator from Vermont also touched on criminal justice reform, saying every American should be "ashamed that we have more people in jail than any other country on Earth: 2.2 million." The Brooklyn native also discussed his call for free tuition at public colleges and universities, dismissing claims that his plan was impractical. "Check out how much tuition was at [CUNY] 50 years ago — virtually free," Sanders said. "If we can have virtually free tuition 50 years ago, we damn well can do it today." Estimates put the crowd around 25,000 to 30,000. CHRIS CAESAR

LONG-STALLED EMAIL PRIVACY BILL ADVANCES IN CONGRESS

3 Legislation that would require law enforcement to obtain a search warrant before asking technology companies to hand over dated emails unanimously moved forward in the House of Representatives on Wednesday, although its prospects for becoming law this year remain uncertain. The House Judiciary Committee voted 28-0 to approve the Email Privacy Act, which would update a decades-old law to mandate federal authorities get a warrant to access emails or other digital communications that are more than 180 days old. Currently, law enforcement and civil agencies can ask a service provider to turn over such aged private communications with only a subpoena, which is subject to less judicial oversight than a warrant. REUTERS

1.751B
NUMBER OF RIDES TAKEN ON THE SUBWAY SYSTEM IN 2014, ACCORDING TO THE MTA

GETTY IMAGES

Not a token effort: MTA begins process to replace MetroCard

The agency has started seeking bids for a project that would swap the cards with technology using credit cards or cellphones, according to reports.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

Trying to swipe your way into a subway station with a MetroCard will soon be a thing of the past as the MTA has taken the first step in replacing the card with 21st century technology.

The agency this week sent out a request for proposals for a "New Fare Payment System" which calls for bids to replace the current fare payment system, according to NBC4 New York.

The request calls for a "systems integrator" to "design, furnish, install, test, integrate and implement an account-based new fare payment and collection system," NBC4 reported.

Ideas that the MTA are looking for during this process are those that use "contactless media," which include smart cards and smartphones, and are also considered easy to maintain and environmentally friendly.

The new system will allow both bus and subway commuters to "pay fares by tapping a contactless bank card, smartphone or any mobile device or MTA-issued smart card against an electronic reader."

$450M
COST TO IMPLEMENT SYSTEM

$6M
SAVINGS PER YEAR

How long will it take?

After a company is hired for the job, it will take about 15 months to install the new system on buses and then eight months for subway stations, DNAinfo reported. Whoever is hired will be awarded a five-year contract to design, install and test the system.

The MTA aims to save about $6 million yearly by getting rid of MetroCards.

Although reports have said that the MTA plans to fully replace the MetroCards by 2022, the agency said that is not going to be the case. The plan is to gradually phase out the cards but still give commuters time to get used to the new system while also allowing the agency to evaluate how the new system is doing.

The MTA plans to begin the phasing out process by June 2018 but there is no definite date as to when the cards will be completely put to rest.

The price for the new fare payment system is estimated to cost about $619 million, according to the MTA.

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Hundreds of Verizon workers strike outside of the telecommunications company's Brooklyn offices. GETTY IMAGES

40K Verizon workers launch union strike

Wireline workers perform network maintenance, among other duties, and also provide customer service at call centers.

JENNY DEHUFF
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

The people who install Verizon's home phone, TV and Internet services launched a strike on Wednesday after unions and management failed to reach an agreement on a new labor contract.

Ray McConville, a labor and corporate spokesman for Verizon, said that more than 36,000 employees from Massachusetts to Virginia went on strike Wednesday, but that Verizon had made preparations for the strike and home services would not be interrupted.

"From our perspective, we don't think it's a productive way to advance bargaining," McConville said.

"We think they should focus their energy in good faith and reach a contract that's fair on both sides. Their claim is that they've exhausted every option and that this was their only measure," he said. "If that was true, the question is, why reject our offer? We successfully reached an agreement the last go-round."

McConville said New York had the highest number on strike, with about 13,900 employees. Pennsylvania was next with 4,600 on strike, followed by Massachusetts with 4,400.

"We're more than prepared to deal with the strike," he said.

"We go into every contract negotiation preparing for the possibility. ... We'll be able to serve our customers with minimal disruption."

The Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) had called for a strike on Monday after an impasse in contract talks.

The unions jointly represent nearly 40,000 employees in Verizon's wireline operations, which include Fios Internet, telephone and TV services.

> *"Verizon has forced us there. ... Nobody wants to go on strike. It's a hardship for our members and our families, it's a hardship for customers."*
>
> Shelton

"Verizon has forced us there. ... Nobody wants to go on strike," CWA President Chris Shelton said. "It's a hardship for our members and our families, it's a hardship for customers."

13.9K
NEW YORK STRIKERS

Verizon and the unions, which represent Verizon workers from states such as Massachusetts, Virginia, New York and Rhode Island, have been in talks over the company's plans to cut health care and pension-related benefits over a three-year period since June. Wireline workers have been working out of contract since the last agreement expired in August.

While a compromise on health care plans has been reached, disputes over offshoring call center jobs and pensions still remain, union representatives said.

"We've tried to work with union leaders to reach a deal," Marc Reed, Verizon's chief administrative officer, said in a company statement.

The last round of contract negotiations in 2011 also led to a strike.

"The company's greed is disgusting," IBEW Local 2222 said in a statement on its website.

"[The CEO] made $18 million last year — more than 200 times the compensation of the average Verizon employee … but they claim they can't afford a fair contract."

"We are available," said Verizon spokesman Rich Young, when asked about the outlook for negotiations. He said no further talks were currently scheduled with the unions, however.

Verizon said the wireline business generated about 29 percent of its revenue in 2015 but less than 7 percent of operating income. Wireline workers perform network maintenance, among other duties, and also provide customer service at call centers.

Reuters contributed to this story.

Crowd cheers as Sanders drops in on picket line

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders paid an impromptu visit to a Verizon workers' picket line in Brooklyn on Wednesday after being endorsed by New York City transit workers as he tried to wrest a bit of union support from rival Hillary Clinton.

The Brooklyn-born Sanders addressed an enthusiastic crowd of striking workers from Verizon Communications Inc. (VZ.N) as "brothers and sisters" and thanked them for their courage in standing up to what he characterized as corporate greed.

It was a scene tailor-made for the senator from Vermont, who has focused on income inequality in his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. Sanders is trying to catch up with Clinton, the front-runner, in Tuesday's primary in New York, a state both candidates have called home.

Workers cheered as Sanders criticized the mammoth communications company for wanting to take away health benefits, outsource jobs and avoid federal income taxes, calling it "just another major American corporation trying to destroy the lives of working Americans."

"Today you are standing up not just for justice for Verizon workers, you're standing up for millions of Americans ... and you're telling corporate America that they cannot have it all," Sanders said.

While Sanders whipped up the crowd of hundreds in Brooklyn, Clinton's campaign issued a statement criticizing Verizon for wanting to outsource more jobs and urging the company to go back to the bargaining table. REUTERS

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Inside look: Terrific terraces

These apartments each have their own style, but all have outdoor spaces perfect for entertaining.

CRISTABELLE TUMOLA
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

New Yorkers are able to tolerate small living spaces, as the places outside their cramped quarters offer plenty of ways to escape.

But there are homes in this city that offer their own escape in both indoor and outdoor living.

Here are three Manhattan and Brooklyn residences that will make you want to stay home — each with its own style — but all with terraces perfect for entertaining, and windows that let in the light when it's too cold to sit outside.

Windsor Towers JURIS MARDWIG

Windsor Tower

City views are accented by gargoyles and griffins on the roof terrace of this penthouse home. The terrace is located on the third level of the triplex at 5 Tudor City Pl. that has two bedrooms and two-and-half bathrooms. Its interior space also brings the outside in, with double-height ceilings and floor-to-ceiling casement windows, also with city views. Selling for $4.5 million, this penthouse is among those at the building that "have served as the backdrop for unforgettable NYC scenes in movies such as 'The Godfather III,' Woody Allen's 'Bullets Over Broadway' and many others," according to its listing.

456 West 19th Street PROVIDED

456 W. 19th St.

The penthouse at 456 W. 19th St. features more than 2,800 square feet of living space with an additional 1,200 square feet of private outdoor terraces designed by Cary Tamarkin. Listed for $11,450,000 the terraces are not the only noticeable feature of the Chelsea building. The three-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath apartment also has floor-to-ceiling, multipaned casement windows in the living room, which offers access to the terrace, along with the dining room and kitchen.

129 N. 3rd St.

Brooklyn is (often) the place to find more space for less, outside of Manhattan, and this condominium townhouse offers four floors with two outdoor terraces. Located in Williamsburg, 129 N. 3rd St., listed for $2,850,000, has a second floor with two bedrooms and a full bath, while the top floor is a master suite. The living room has a floor-to-ceiling glass wall that opens to the 400-square-foot private garden with built-in barbecue. There is an additional terrace plus access to the private rooftop from the master suite.

129 North 3rd Street PROVIDED

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Boxer sought after girlfriend hospitalized

The victim, his girlfriend, has been placed in a medically induced coma at the hospital.

JASON NUCKOLLS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

Josh Luteran NYPD

The NYPD is searching for an amateur boxer accused of hitting his girlfriend then fleeing. As police conduct their manhunt, doctors have placed the woman in a medically induced coma.

Police reported that Josh Luteran, 30, was wanted for questioning in connection to an alleged assault that took place shortly after 1 a.m. on Tuesday in a Brooklyn residence.

The victim, a 38-year-old woman, was taken to Methodist Hospital in critical but stable condition, police stated.

Luteran, a local boxer, was arguing with his girlfriend about money, police told NBC4. Reportedly, Luteran fled the scene before authorities arrived.

His girlfriend has been placed in a medically induced coma at the hospital, ABC7 added.

Luteran was last seen wearing a black skull cap, jacket and black sweatpants, according to police.

Anyone with information should call 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or 1-888-57-PISTA (74782) for Spanish or submit tips online at www.NYPDcrimestoppers.com.

NYPD: Trio knocks teen out in the Bronx and steals sneakers

Sneaker robbery suspects NYPD

The NYPD is asking for the public's help in identifying three suspects wanted for knocking out a young boy on a Bronx street before stealing his sneakers.

On April 3 at about 10 p.m. the 15-year-old victim was in front of 2342 Jerome Ave. when he was approached from behind by the three suspects, police said.

The trio then allegedly grabbed the teen by the waist and threw him onto the ground, leaving him unconscious, took his Air Jordan sneakers and ran away northbound on Jerome Avenue towards East Fordham Road, authorities said.

Emergency personnel took the victim to a local hospital where he was in stable condition.

Police describe the three suspects — who can be seen following the victim on surveillance video — as between 15 and 19 years old, and last seen wearing red, black and white hoodies, respectively.

Anyone with information in regards to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782).

The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website or by texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES) then enter TIP577. ANGY ALTAMIRANO

2 TRAIN

Police: Subway rider slashed on 2 train after suspects steal bag of Tupperware

Police are looking for two men they say slashed a subway rider on a Bronx train last week as they were attempting to steal his book bag — which only contained Tupperware.

On April 5, at about 1:15 a.m., the 26-year-old victim was riding on a southbound 2 train near the Jackson Avenue station when the two suspects approached him and tried to take his book bag, according to authorities.

The victim fought with the two men and as a result was slashed on the back of his head, his forehead and left hand, police said. He then got off the train at the Jackson Avenue station and the suspects stayed on the train with the bag that only contained the plastic containers. The victim was taken to Lincoln Hospital where he was treated and released.

Police describe the two suspects — who were caught on surveillance video — as black men in their early 20s. The first man is described to be 5 feet 8 inches tall and 210 pounds, the second suspect is said to be 5 feet 7 inches tall and weighs 150. Anyone with information can to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477).

ANGY ALTAMIRANO

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Filmmaker shares parents' sea-crossed love story

After first meeting in 1940s Havana, Judy Schiller's parents could only communicate through Yiddish. They would eventually make their way to Queens.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

Isabel and Reuben Schiller in Havana; At top is Judy Schiller PROVIDED

In her debut film, one New York City filmmaker shares her parents' unique love story and takes viewers on a trip through history.

Judy Schiller is the writer and director behind the documentary "It Happened in Havana: A Yiddish Love Story," a film that highlights the story of her parents, Reuben and Isabel Schiller, a Forest Hills, Queens, couple who first laid eyes on each other in 1940s Havana, Cuba.

Schiller — a professional photographer who has worked with musicians such as Miles Davis — said that she always had the desire to be a filmmaker in the back of her mind. In 2015 Martin Scorsese's documentary "Italianamerican" inspired her to make a movie about her own parents and share with viewers decades worth of footage that her family had kept, ranging from the 1920s through the 1950s.

"I embarked on this not knowing a lot of things," Schiller said about deciding to start her movie. "I didn't know what I would get out of this. When you make a documentary film there is no script, you don't know what you are going to end up with."

After going down memory lane with her parents, Schiller realized that the film was not just a family or personal venture; it was a story worth sharing with everyone.

The 27-minute documentary features the couple — who at the time of filming had been married for 61 years — sitting on the couch at their Forest Hills home, where they had lived in for over half a century, looking back at their past.

Both discuss their childhoods, with her dad growing up on the Lower East Side and her mother moving from Eastern Europe to Cuba as a young girl.

The film's name comes from the main focus of the film, which follows the courtship of Schiller's parents, which began in Havana when her father was on vacation in Cuba.

After meeting, the two fell for each other, said Schiller, and even after her father went back to the United States after 10 days, they wrote letters.

The catch was that her father could not speak Spanish and her mother could not speak English, so the two communicated through Yiddish.

Schiller's mother months later moved to the United States, her father was drafted to serve in World War II, and the two then later married and moved into their Forest Hills home in 1959.

According to Schiller, the film not only tells her parents' love story but it also serves as a history lesson for viewers. Throughout the film her father discusses what it was like at a time without electricity, remembering both World Wars, and experiencing life in Cuba before Fidel Castro.

"It was a journey for me," she said. "It was really a learning experience and a journey of discovery in many ways."

On Thursday, the film will make its television premiere at 10:30 p.m. on PBS channel THIRTEEN in New York and screened on its website.

And although both her parents passed away before the film debuted, Schiller said she knows they are happy with the finished product.

"I said to myself, I'm going to make this movie and I'm going to take it as far as I can take it," she said. "Wherever [my parents] are, they're smiling."

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Sanders GETTY IMAGES

Dem candidates look to debate to build momentum

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Sanders' campaign has benefited from a perceived backlash to New York's various corruption controversies, which helps his campaign more than Clinton's.

JASON NUCKOLLS
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Both Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders are looking to move their campaign momentum into high gear Thursday night as each brings a strategy for touting their strengths on an issue-by-issue basis.

For Clinton, the strategy hinges on limiting her opponent's appeal by emphasizing her left-of-Sanders gun-control record and reminding New Yorkers of her role representing them in the Senate, USA Today reported.

"Most of the guns that are used in crimes and violence and killings in New York come from out of state," Clinton was quoted by CNN. "And the state that has the highest per capita number of those guns that end up committing crimes in New York come from Vermont."

For Sanders, the debate will be an opportunity to broaden the senator's appeal to minorities, who have been seen to favor the Clinton campaign, the Observer reported.

If you watch

The debate starts Thursday at 9 p.m. EST and will be carried by CNN.

"That's what we're going to do to win New York. We're going to have to introduce Bernie to voters of color, to African-Americans and Latinos," Sanders campaign pollster Ben Tulchin told the Observer. "When we do, we make up a lot of ground, and we can compete."

Sanders' campaign has also benefited from a perceived backlash to the state's various corruption controversies, which helps his campaign more than Clinton's, USA Today added.

The Clinton camp, though, has countered by reminding voters of Sanders' recent New York Daily News interview in which he failed to explain specifically how he will carry out some of his promises to break up large banks, CNN stated.

"I have noticed that under the bright spotlight and scrutiny here in New York, Sen. Sanders has had trouble answering questions," Clinton was quoted by CNN. "He has had trouble answering questions about his core issue, namely, dealing with the banks. He has had trouble answering foreign policy questions."

"I have noticed that under the bright spotlight and scrutiny here in New York, Sen. Sanders has had trouble answering questions ... about his core issue, namely, dealing with the banks."

Clinton

A view of the Austin city skyline GETTY IMAGES

One dead, 11 hurt in hydrogen sulfide release in Austin

One person died and at least 11 were injured in a release of poisonous hydrogen sulfide gas at an apartment building near the University of Texas at Austin on Wednesday, fire officials said.

Austin firefighters responded to a hazardous materials call from an apartment at the complex and found a man believed to be in his 20s dead at the scene, said Austin Fire Department Lieutenant Kevin Haas.

Haas said the initial investigation determined that the release of the chemical was deemed "an intentional act," and was being investigated as a suicide.

It was unclear where the gas came from, although Haas said the victim likely released it from a container brought into the apartment.

Hydrogen sulfide is a colorless gas that smells of rotten eggs.

Six people were taken with non-life-threatening injuries to a hospital, and five others refused care, Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services spokesman Captain Darren Noak said.

The Austin Fire Department responded around 2:30 p.m. to a call reporting a cardiac arrest. Fire department personnel found a handwritten note on a closet door inside the apartment where the deceased victim was found that warned of danger, and to "get out," and of the presence of hydrogen sulfide, Haas said.

The emergency responders decontaminated the building and evacuated residents. Photos on social media showed emergency workers and vehicles including a fire truck on a street that had been blocked off from traffic.

Noak said residents were later cleared to return to the building.

It was unclear whether the man who died or the people injured were students, a University of Texas at Austin spokeswoman said. REUTERS

BRIEF

Man sentenced to four years for kidnapping son from mother

An Ohio man was sentenced Wednesday to four years in prison for taking his 5-year-old son from his mother's house in Alabama in 2002 and living with him under false identities for 13 years.

Bobby Hernandez, 53, was also given five years' probation by Cuyahoga County Judge Cassandra Collier-Williams. He had faced up to 54 years in prison.

Hernandez made brief statements in court, including apologies to his son and former girlfriend, before becoming overwhelmed by emotion. "Julian was always the most important thing to me," he said.

In March, he pleaded guilty to 15 charges: two counts of felony kidnapping, 10 of tampering with records, two of interference with custody and one of forgery. Seventeen other charges were dropped as part of a plea agreement.

Hernandez was arrested in November 2015 after the FBI received a tip that he and his son were living in Cleveland.

The judge also removed the no-contact order in the case, allowing Julian to visit his father. "This case is a mother's nightmare," Collier-Williams said. She added that she took Julian's request into account in the sentencing. REUTERS

Bobby Hernandez CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE HANDOUT

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Judge orders 'affluenza' teen to spend about two years in jail

Ethan Couch has been in a Tarrant County jail since January. In his first appearance in adult court, he was given the sentence of almost two years in jail, the maximum allowable probation conditions for the case in the adult system.

A Texas county judge sentenced Ethan Couch, the "affluenza" teen, on Wednesday to serve four consecutive 180-day terms in jail after he killed four people outside Fort Worth with his pickup truck while driving drunk in 2013.

"You are not getting out of jail today," Judge Wayne Salvant told Couch, who was wearing a red jumpsuit from the Tarrant County Jail. Salvant said he will hold another hearing in two weeks to consider the sentence he imposed.

At his trial in juvenile court in 2013 when he was 16, a psychologist testifying on his behalf said Couch was so spoiled by his wealthy parents that he could not tell right from wrong. The psychologist described the affliction as "affluenza," a term that quickly became a media buzzword.

He was sentenced to 10 years of probation, a penalty that sparked outrage from critics who ridiculed the affluenza defense and said his family's wealth helped the teen avoid jail.

Tarrant County Sheriff Dee Anderson said Couch's demeanor has changed since being in jail from being quite cocky at first to rather compliant.

The change is due to the "stark reality he is dealing with today," Anderson told reporters at court, adding Couch will remain in solitary confinement for his own protection.

Ethan Couch JALISCO STATE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

Couch was taken into custody in Texas after he fled to Mexico in December with his mother, apparently to avoid arrest for violating the drink- and drug-free terms of the probation deal after video on social media appeared to show him at a party where alcohol was being consumed.

Judge Salvant is also presiding over the case of his mother, Tonya Couch.

She is charged with helping her son flee to Mexico. She was released on bail but is under home confinement awaiting trial. REUTERS

Almost 400,000 disabled Americans eligible for student loan forgiveness

The U.S. government announced plans on Tuesday to forgive $7.7 billion in student loans for about 387,000 permanently disabled borrowers.

While permanently disabled Americans are already permitted student loan forgiveness under the Higher Education Act, many who are eligible have not taken advantage of the debt relief, the Department of Education said in a statement.

Of the 387,000 borrowers identified by the department as eligible but have not taken part in the program, about 179,000 of them are in default, potentially causing them to lose their federal tax refunds and Social Security benefits, the government said.

"Too many eligible borrowers were falling through the cracks, unaware they were eligible for relief," Education Undersecretary Ted Mitchell said in a statement. "We need to make it easier, not harder, for them to receive the benefits they are due."

The Education Department has partnered with the Social Security Administration to identify these borrowers.

Beginning Friday, borrowers who were identified in the first round will receive a letter explaining their eligibility for loan forgiveness and what steps they need to take to receive a discharge.

The letters will be distributed over four months. A follow-up letter will be sent 120 days after the first letter if the department does not receive a signed application. REUTERS

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US confirms Zika causes severe birth defects

The announcement comes at a critical time for the Obama Administration, which has been trying to get Congress to come up with funding to fight the virus.

A baby with symptoms of of the Zika virus is examined by a doctor. GETTY IMAGES

U.S. health officials have concluded that infection with the Zika virus in pregnant women is a cause of the birth defect microcephaly and other severe brain abnormalities in babies.

"It is now clear, the CDC has concluded, that Zika virus does cause microcephaly," Tom Frieden, director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said in a conference call with reporters on Wednesday. "There isn't any doubt that Zika causes microcephaly."

U.S. and world health officials have been saying for some time that mounting scientific evidence points to the mosquito-born virus as the likely cause of the alarming rise in microcephaly in Zika-hit areas of Brazil. It had not been declared as the definitive cause until now.

The Obama administration has requested about $1.9 billion for Zika prevention and fighting efforts, but the CDC has been forced to divert funds intended for Ebola while awaiting new funding from Congress.

The removal of any lingering doubt about the cause of the birth defects may help spur more intensive efforts to develop diagnostics and vaccines specific to Zika, which is closely related to dengue and other mosquito-borne viruses.

The CDC said it believes that microcephaly, characterized by unusually small head size that can lead to developmental problems in babies, is likely part of a range of serious birth defects being caused by Zika. It also said the microcephaly cases it has reviewed in Brazil is a particularly severe form with devastating brain abnormalities. REUTERS

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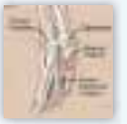
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US regulators fail 'living wills' at five of eight big banks

U.S. regulators gave a failing grade to five big banks on Wednesday, including JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo, on their plans for a bankruptcy that would not rely on taxpayer money, giving them until Oct. 1 to make amends or risk sanctions.

The move officially starts a long regulatory chain that could end with breaking up the banks. Nearly a decade after the financial crisis, it underscored how the debate about banks being "too big to fail" continues to rage in Washington and exasperate on Wall Street.

The banks failed for reasons ranging from the way liquidity would be housed and shuffled among domestic and foreign subsidiaries to the manner in which executives would communicate problems as they arose during a crisis.

Wednesday's announcement was the first time the two major banking regulators, the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, issued joint determinations flunking banks' plans, commonly called "living wills."

If the five, which also included Bank of America, State Street Corp. and Bank of New York Mellon Corp., do not correct serious "deficiencies" in their plans by October, they could face stricter regulations, like higher capital requirements or limits on business activities, regulators said. REUTERS

RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

In line early for Bernie rally

New Yorkers began waiting in line at noon Wednesday for a Bernie Sanders rally at 8 p.m. in Washington Square Park. BILLY BECERRA, METRO

Clinton to propose creation of immigrant affairs office

Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton GETTY IMAGES

Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton on Wednesday said she will propose the creation of a national Office of Immigrant Affairs should she win the White House in November, as she seeks to woo minority and immigrant voters in New York less than a week before the state's primary.

The office would coordinate policies and programs among federal agencies and with state and local governments, Clinton said at an event in New York City where she met with immigrant-rights activists.

"It's an issue that cuts across all levels of government," she said. She added that it would expand the efforts of President Barack Obama's Task Force on New Americans, which was created in 2014 to help immigrants and refugees integrate better into the United States.

In contrast, Republican candidates have largely proposed tougher immigration rules. Republican front-runner Donald Trump has called for building a wall along the border with Mexico and a temporary ban on Muslims entering the country.

The New York primary Tuesday could either help former Secretary of State Clinton bolster her status as the Democratic front-runner or hand a significant victory to rival Bernie Sanders, the Vermont senator seeking to defy expectations and win the party's nomination for the Nov. 8 election.

Both candidates are campaigning across the state, looking to win over New York's diverse population, including voters from immigrant families. Around 19 percent of the state's population is Hispanic or Latino, according to the U.S. Census.

With 247 pledged delegates at stake, the state is among the most significant nominating contests left on the calendar before the Democrats' July 25-28 convention in Philadelphia.

Clinton holds a double-digit lead in opinion polls over Sanders in New York, the state where he was born and which she served for eight years as a U.S. senator. She also holds a commanding lead in pledged delegates overall, leaving Sanders only a narrow path if he is to win the nomination out from under her, a task some pundits say is already beyond him.

A Democratic candidate needs 2,383 delegates to clinch the nomination. Those can come from any combination of pledged delegates won in primaries and caucuses, as well as so-called superdelegates, who can vote as they choose. REUTERS

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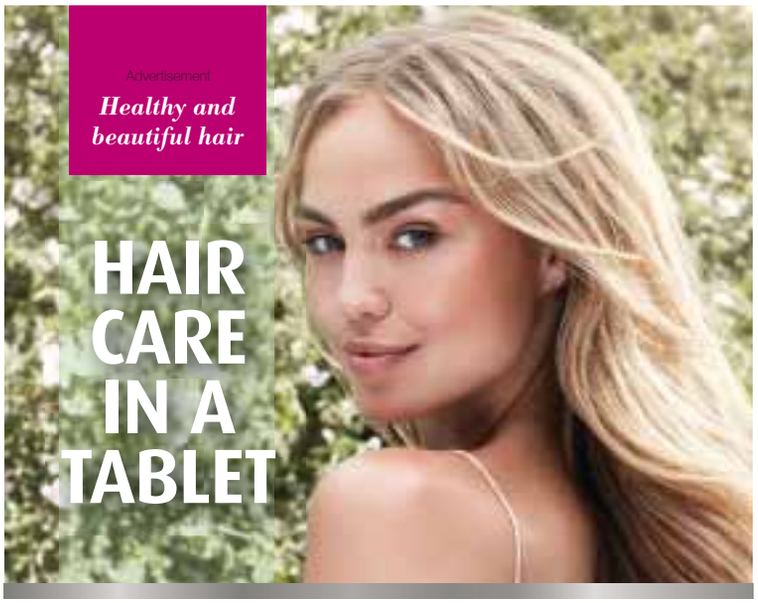

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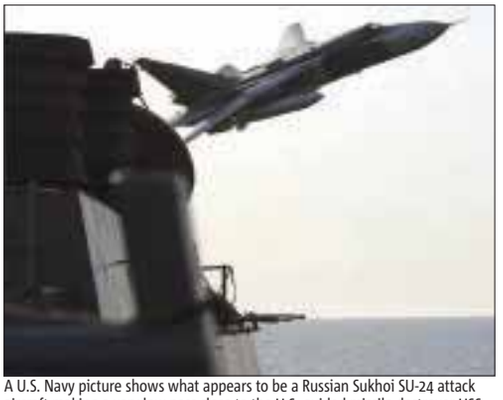
Russia jets make 'simulated attack' passes near U.S. destroyer: U.S.

Two Russian warplanes flew simulated attack passes near a U.S. guided missile destroyer in the Baltic Sea on Tuesday, the U.S. military said, with one official describing them as one of the most aggressive interactions in recent memory.

The repeated flights by the Sukhoi SU-24 warplanes, which also flew near the ship a day earlier, were so close they created wake in the water, with 11 passes, the official said. The planes carried no visible weaponry, the official said on Wednesday.

A Russian KA-27 Helix helicopter also made seven passes around the USS Donald Cook, taking pictures. The nearest Russian territory was about 70 nautical miles away in its enclave of Kaliningrad, which sits between Lithuania and Poland.



A U.S. Navy picture shows what appears to be a Russian Sukhoi SU-24 attack aircraft making a very low pass close to the U.S. guided missile destroyer USS Donald Cook in the Baltic Sea in this picture taken April 12, 2016 and released April 13, 2016. **US NAVY HANDOUT**

"They tried to raise them [the Russian aircraft] on the radio but they did not answer," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity, adding the U.S. ship was in international waters.

The U.S. military on Wednesday released photos and videos of the incidents. In one photograph, an SU-24 appears to pass at extremely low altitude over the Donald Cook's bow.

The events were reminiscent of the Cold War, when a series of close calls led to a bilateral agreement aimed at avoiding dangerous interactions at sea that was signed in 1972 by then-Secretary of the Navy John Warner and Soviet Admiral Sergei Gorshkov.

The agreement prohibited "simulated attacks against aircraft or ships, performing aerobatics over ships, or dropping hazardous objects near them."

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, "This incident ... is entirely inconsistent with the professional norms of militaries operating in proximity to each other in international water and international airspace."

The incident came as NATO plans its biggest build-up in eastern Europe since the Cold War to counter what the alliance, and in particular the three Baltic states and Poland, consider to be a more aggressive Russia. **REUTERS**

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Stop telling Ruby Rose she made you gay

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Ruby Rose — breakout star of "Orange is the New Black" and not to be confused with Chris Tucker's character from "The Fifth Element" — has a simple message for all the women out there who are fans of a particular brand of hyperbole in complimenting her on her looks. "When people say to me that I turned them gay, I just laugh, because that's not really even a possibility. It sounds like I did something against their will in the middle of the night, as if I crept into their brain and pushed the gay button, then did an evil laugh and left them to fend for themselves — newly gay and alone in the world," she tells Galore magazine. "People will say to J. Law, 'I want to be your best friend,' or to T. Swift, 'I want to be in your squad.' Everyone has got their little thing, and the catch phrase I got after 'Orange' was, 'She turned me gay.'" It's a heck of a responsibility, honestly, but here's the most important part: Rose just flat-out doesn't believe you. "I break it down like this: Did I find Channing Tatum in 'Magic Mike' to be extremely hot? Yes! Could I now turn straight for him without having previously ever had a desire to be with a man? The answer is, nope."

Megan Fox knows who didn't knock her up

It's unclear what the state of pregnant Megan Fox's relationship with Brian Austin Green is these days, what with that divorce filing eight months ago and all, which has led to a fair amount of speculation online about the exact paternity of her third child. And it's speculation that Fox herself has seen — and thinks is hilarious. While she won't put it all to rest with an official confirmation, she is willing at least to rule a few suspects out — all of whom, coincidentally, happen to be men she's worked with. Fox posted a photo lineup of Shia LaBeouf, Will Arnett and Jake Johnson with the caption, "#NotTheFather," which is awfully helpful of her. I'm sure LaBeouf is relieved, at least. But hey, you know who wasn't included in that collage? Green himself. Curious, no?

DAILY VIDEO

YOUTUBE

Brothers convince little sister of zombie apocalypse

You know your prank video has truly gone viral when it racks up more than 9 million views on YouTube. But then, a really great prank can do that. Like this one: A couple of brothers pick up their little sister from having her wisdom teeth out and then convince her that the zombie apocalypse has broken out during her drugged-up ride home. It's priceless. But honestly, no prank they could pull is better than her parents naming her Millicent.

Lindsay Lohan probably not engaged (unless she is)

Less than a month after revealing that she has a new boyfriend, Lindsay Lohan is reportedly set to tie the knot. The perennially troubled starlet is said to be engaged to Russian business heir Egor Tarabasov, according to Entertainment Tonight. Her rep denied the engagement rumors to People, saying they hold "no merit," but who knows, maybe this really is the one. Maybe that move to London really did do her some good. Maybe it's time to stop being so cynical and believe people can change. Stranger things have happened.

Kirsten Dunst is on the market again

Kirsten Dunst first met Garrett Hedlund while filming "On the Road" four years ago and has been dating him ever since. Well, she had been dating him, rather — but I'm getting ahead of myself. Dunst and Hedlund were living together in L.A. and even, if anonymous sources are to be believed, moving toward an engagement announcement. But today, not so much, according to Us Weekly, as the tabloid reports that the pair are done, having gone and broken up. Which is kind of a bummer, honestly. These are, after all, two of the nicer denizens of Hollywood, genuinely pleasant people who seemed really happy together. Oh, well.

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The Joy Formidable breaks it down, without breaking up

"It did us a lot of good to go home and pull the shutters down."

LINDA LABAN
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

"This is not a breakup album. We definitely didn't want to make one of those," says The Joy Formidable's Ritzy Bryan. PROVIDED

Don't call The Joy Formidable's third album, "Hitch," a breakup record. True, the album, which dropped at the end of March, is the Welsh rock trio's first since singer and guitarist Rhiannon "Ritzy" Bryan split-up with co-founding bassist Rhydian Dafydd. But, says Bryan, things were all good by the time they began recording in their native North Wales last year.

"It's been a while now since Rhyd and I split up. That all happened during the tour for the last record in 2014," Bryan says. "It was hard for a while during the tour, but we worked through it. This is not a breakup album. We definitely didn't want to make one of those."

Indeed, there's not a teary ballad in sight and the trio, which includes drummer Matthew James Thomas, sound fiery and feisty. As they say, what doesn't break you makes you stronger, but there was a dark period, which affected more than Bryan and Dafydd.

"We were together for seven years, so there was all the initial pain. We did our grieving during the last tour. But Matt was affected too — he felt like a part of his family had broken up. He went through it as much as us, in a way. He didn't know whether it was going to be antagonistic, or what the fallout would be."

Thankfully, there was none. Besides, the business wrangling going on behind the scenes as the band's infrastructure — record label and management — fell apart, galvanized the three. The band recognized they needed space and headed home to North Wales to recoup, rebuild and record, just the three of them.

"It did us a lot of good to go home and pull the shutters down. It brings out the best in everybody to be in an environment where you feel free to experiment and go outside yourself," says Bryan of creating "Hitch."

"There's an element of lost love to the record and it chronicles change, but it also includes exciting elements of change. But the record is also us celebrating the fact that we kept on keeping on. It's celebrating still being a group: It celebrates tenacity and true friendship."

If you go

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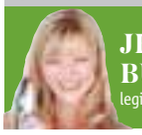
Eddie Redmayne does his magic in the trailer for "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them." WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Nerding out over 'Fantastic Beasts'

Geek Girl in Hollywood



JENNA BUSCH
legionofleia.com

Last weekend, we got a new trailer for the "Harry Potter" prequel (sort of), "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them." I was at a convention and my schedule was packed to the gills, but after I watched (with my sister Christina, who is as big a "Harry Potter" fan as I am), it was all we could talk about. If you're not familiar with the new film, this is the story of Newt Scamander (Eddie Redmayne), a wizard from Hogwarts back in the 1920s, who goes to New York on an adventure. It's based on J.K. Rowling's book with the same title about magical creatures, which is credited to Scamander.

"Fantastic Beasts" doesn't really have a narrative, so we have no idea what the plot of the story will be. However, just hearing the first strains of the so-familiar score put me right back into the big armchair where I read the very first book. It made me remember that back then I was too old to get an owl asking me to go to Hogwarts, but that I was pulled in anyway. I've written before about fandom, my happiness with the continued expanded universe and Rowling's refusal to leave us hanging. But this trailer awakened the "Harry Potter" love again, and I suspect that I'm not the only one.

The trailer gives us a few clues about what we're going to see. First, it appears that Dumbledore (oh, how I miss him) is an ally of Scamander's, but the poor boy was kicked out of Hogwarts for doing something dangerous with a magical creature that put everyone's lives in danger.

There is something about this fandom that really grabs people. Heck, I just got re-sorted from Gryffindor into Ravenclaw, and it actually really threw me for a loop for a bit! (For the record, I'm very proud to be a Ravenclaw!) Is your Hogwarts house part of your identity?

So tell me, Harry Potter fans: Are you as committed to this as I am? Are you excited to go back into this world? Have you been re-sorted, and how did it feel? Remind me that I'm not the only one who says "accio Diet Coke" when I'm thirsty.

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Seeing the hidden city

New York is much stranger than you know. Find out how on Obscura Day.

T. MICHELLE MURPHY
@TMichelleMurphy
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If you're into cemetery cocktail parties or speakeasy arcades — the kind of events that reveal the history of a place — you've probably heard of the Obscura Society. The "alternative travel" group makes it their mission to reveal the extraordinary secrets all around us with tours of abandoned spaces, treks that highlight the hidden history of a neighborhood you thought you knew, and other thought-provoking journeys into the past, present — and possibility.

This Saturday, they're going all out with Obscura Day with 16 mysterious events across the five boroughs, alongside thousands of others around the world exploring their own cities in 25 countries at over 150 events.

"The essence of some of our events is bringing people to hidden places they might not normally have access to," says Rebecca Posner, head of events at Obscura Society New York. "We're always trying to give people unusual points of view and adventures, a sense of what it means to be in this world, in the past. It's a kind of time travel. It brings you closer to making sense of the reality you live in, but also escaping when you can't always leave."

Obscura Day, now in its fifth year, has events that run the gamut of the group's usual gatherings, which include lectures, walking tours, workshops and inventive parties. This year, it kicks off with Saturday Morning Pinball & Vintage Cartoons, a breakfast meetup in a secret arcade in the back of a laundromat in Greenpoint. From there, everyone goes off on their own adventures, like the Brooklyn Navy Yard Tour or Show and Tale at the Morbid Anatomy Museum. At dusk, there's a Secret Garden Party at Marble Cemetery in the East Village.

For Posner, the hardest part is that "I really want to be everywhere." Though she'll be busy orchestrating some of the day's main events, she's not worried about missing out: "The sold-out events, like the Coney Island Creek Excursion, we'll definitely run again."

Posner hopes attendees will leave wondering about the rest of what they pass by every day. "I feel wonder for this city. I feel the stories that are literally in the pavement, in the walls," she says. "It adds a sense of curiosity to my daily movement. We can hopefully help other people feel the same thing, too."

Obscura events range from free to $75; Atlasobscura.com/obscuraday2016

Woodlawn Cemetery STEVE ACRES

things to do

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Funny because it's true

Roz Chast's cartoons of NYC life are getting their own exhibit at MCNY.

EVA KIS
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When you find yourself nodding along with The New Yorker's wry cartoons about life in the city, chances are good it's another gem by Roz Chast.

The Brooklyn native, 61, sent her first cartoon to the magazine just a year out of art school in 1978 and has had over 1,000 of her wry portraits of city life published since.

On Thursday, April 14, the Museum of the City of New York opens a retrospective of her "dark and sympathetic" works, including a mural she hand-painted for the exhibit (of a subway car as living room, natch) as well as unpublished pieces and sketches to compare with the final published drawings — even cartoonists have editors.

"I was thinking [The New Yorker] wouldn't take anything. I thought my work had much more in common with The Village Voice," the artist said at a press preview on Wednesday. "It's still thrilling for me when they buy a cartoon."

It's good that worked out, because her backup plan at the time was Playboy magazine. "They said, 'Could you make it more Playboy?' It came out like parodies of Playboy," she recalled.

Meet Roz Chast at MCNY on May 6 and Sept. 21. EVA KIS

If you go

Roz Chast: Cartoon Memoirs
April 14-Oct. 9
Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave.
$14, MCNY.org

In person, Chast is small and joyful. Even though the Second Avenue subway line has been under construction her entire life, city living hasn't made her a pessimist — but she's suspicious of those who avoid its darker aspects. "If you always have to not talk about [an issue], 'Let's put a smile on it,' that is so cynical," she said. "I can't watch sitcoms."

She's also put much of her own inner life on display, from a wall of phobias (everyone remembers the first time they met a waterbug) to what it's like to be a fish out of water outside the city limits. Chast and her husband left Park Slope after the birth of their second child in 1990 for suburban Connecticut (she maintains a small studio on the Upper West Side), and she's learned a lot about the whole other world outside NYC, including this thing called a mailbox.

The oldest sketch in the exhibit is one of a suburban mailbox, which Chast drew having only seen pictures of them. When her editor questioned the flag on its side, she said it was a handle to open it — and the editor signed off on it. "I don't want to brag, but I know all about these mailboxes now. We even have one," she joked.

For a lifelong subway rider ("I always felt like if I got Alzheimer's, the stops on the D line would be the last things to fall away") adjusting to a car-based lifestyle never really happened: "When you're driving, you're not really in a town."

In the end, each kind of living has its quirks and charms, but you can't take New York out of the girl. "For anybody who lives here, I think, it always has a pull to come back when I leave," she said. "I can feel the pull, and it's always a relief to come back."

Chast was The New Yorker's first female cartoonist. EVA KIS

One of the rooms in Riddle Me Out's Alice in Wonderland scenario. PROVIDED

Stuck inside Wonderland

Where is Alice when you need her? We could've used her help getting out of Wonderland.

This was the scenario facing our group of five at NYC's newest room-escape game, Riddle Me Out, which launched this week in Midtown. Each game takes an hour and can be played by between two and eight people, with hints offered every five minutes via a wall-mounted screen or as needed from the game master over an intercom.

And frankly, we needed them. Though the games are for ages 14 and above, it would've been useful to have a kid along for the Alice experience (which is not just one room, but that's all we'll spoil about it). It's the more abstract of the three scenarios offered by Riddle Me Out, and our team of literary types wasn't quite equipped for the kind of creativity and, well, playing necessary to unlock the clues.

The company also bills itself as "tech-heavy," but it could polish some of its basics — a few of the objects in the room that shouldn't be usable appeared to be, the decoration was lovely but distracting since much of it didn't serve a purpose, and a lock that didn't cooperate for me worked when another player tried it.

Other rooms, which are more linear but also difficult, involve breaking into a bank vault (and we're not just talking figuring out a lock combo) and trying to escape from jail — from separate cells, while handcuffed. Talk about a team-building exercise. EVA KIS

Riddle Me Out is open seven days a week, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. at 435 Fifth Ave., Floor 4. Riddlemeout.com

Listings

MUSIC

Beatles Anniversary Tribute

April 14, 8 p.m.
The Bell House, 149 Seventh St.
$12-$15, Thebellhouseny.com
In 1966, a little album called "Revolver" dropped and became lucky No. 7 for The Beatles — just as they considered breaking up. Fifty years later we're still celebrating it, with a tribute concert featuring local artists on each of the tracks, from "Eleanor Rigby" to "Yellow Submarine." Musicians include Janna Pelle, Carbon Mirage, Animal Reporters and Cousin Earth. Tickets are $12 in advance and $15 at the door.

FILM

'The Invitation'

April 15-17
Videology, 308 Bedford Ave., Brookly, $11.54, Videologybarandcinema.com
Something is not right when Will (Logan Marshall-Greene) shows up uninvited to a dinner party being thrown by his ex-wife (Tammy Blanchard) and her new husband (Michiel Huisman) in "The Invitation." Videology is screening the tension-packed movie over three nights, and we have to imagine that it will help to have a bartender and some friends nearby as the dread mounts and the adrenaline begins to kick in.

PARTY

Beyonce vs. Rihanna Tribute Party

April 16, 11:59 p.m.
Brooklyn Bowl, 61 Wythe Ave.
$15, Brooklynbowl.com
It's time to throw down on the dance floor to settle an important controversy: Who's your bae, Beyonce or Rihanna? Fans of both should show up prepared to hash it out as DJs play the top tracks from each artist (and, as they emphasize, there will be no remixes or mash-ups in rotation). But as much as it's a dance battle, it's also a tribute party, so prepare to celebrate the contributions of both deserving divas.

MUSIC

Wall-to-Wall Stephen Schwartz

April 16, 3-11 p.m.
Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway
Free-$100, Symphonyspace.org
Broadway royalty will be on display at a FREE event celebrating legendary Stephen Schwartz. The composer of "Wicked," "Pippin" and "Godspell," among numerous other culture-shaping contributions, will be feted at Symphony Space's annual Wall-to-Wall. His hits from the stage and screen will be sung by the likes of Patti LuPone, Liz Callaway, Raul Esparza and Laura Osnes. Seating is first-come, first-serve.

LASER TAG

Lazer Brunch

April 17, 1 p.m.
Hudson Terrace, 621 W. 46th St.
$15, Hudsonterracenyc.com
Your Sunday brunch is about to get a lot more thrilling when Hudson Terrace kicks off its monthly Lazer Brunch. This weekend is the very first time the hotel's salon will be transformed into an adults-only laser tag game, which kicks off at 1 p.m. and is followed by a boozy brunch on the rooftop. In addition to pumping up for the week ahead with a heated game and serious eats, you'll also be able to enjoy the city skyline and take some Insta-worthy shots.

HOME DECOR

Design on a Dime

April 20-23
Metropolitan Pavilion
125 W. 18th St.
$200-$25,000, Housingworks.org
One of the biggest events of the season arrives next weekend. Each year, 60 of the world's top interior designers create tableaus at the Metropolitan Pavilion. Guests can view the settings or shop for pieces that are marked down to a fraction of retail value. The event kicks off with an awards dinner, followed the next night with a cocktail reception and then two days of public showings.
T. MICHELLE MURPHY

Big fun, little city

Some of America's best festivals are held off the beaten path.

Fodor's Travel

You may not know them, but some of the country's best festivals are held in small towns scattered throughout the U.S. Featuring a wide range of themes, these celebrations often include parades, entertainment, food and plenty of special events. Make an effort to time a vacation during one of these beloved fests, which are held at various points throughout the year. Music festivals, film festivals, flower festivals, food festivals and more make the list of America's 15 best small-town events.

Elkhart Jazz Festival

Elkhart, Indiana
Since launching in 1988, the Elkhart Jazz Festival has grown from 67 musicians and 3,000 attendees to more than 100 performers playing to a crowd of over 15,000. The annual festival takes place in June in northern Indiana's Elkhart, known as the Band Instrument Capital of the World and home to more than 2,000 people who build instruments, many of which are showcased in the festival, so you're sure to hear something totally new.

Lilac Festival

Mackinac Island, Michigan
This 10-day fest is held every June to draw visitors to Mackinac Island when the lilacs are in full bloom. Dating back to 1949, the lilac-themed celebration has grown throughout the years, but key traditions, such as crowning a Lilac Queen, have remained the same. During the festival, visitors can also enjoy concerts in the park, the lilac walk and talks, dancing, tours and the beautiful flowering trees — some more than 150 years old. Horse-drawn floats make up the festival's finale, the Grand Parade, which has been recognized by the Library of Congress as a "local legacy" event.

Telluride Film Festival

Telluride, Colorado
Dating back to 1979, the Telluride Film Festival has always maintained the element of surprise. Unlike most other film fests, at Telluride nobody knows what movies are showing, which celebrities are attending or who is being honored. This state of anticipation helps build excitement for the annual event, where "Brokeback Mountain," "Juno" and "Up in the Air" have all been shown in past years. The festival includes premieres, Q&A sessions and plenty of special guests, ranging from Reese Witherspoon to Brad Pitt to Jon Stewart. More than 3,000 people attend the event, which is held during Labor Day weekend.

Telluride Film Festival GETTY IMAGES

National Shrimp Festival

Gulf Shores, Alabama
With more than 250 vendors, musical entertainment, an outdoor village and, of course, plenty of shrimp, it's no surprise that more than 250,000 people attend this free beach festival held in October every year. The national celebration started in 1971 as a way to draw visitors to Gulf Shores beaches after Labor Day and has now established itself as an Alabama mainstay. And there's plenty of shrimp-themed fun to be had: Chefs compete to win the annual restaurant challenge with their best shrimp dishes, with more than 200 pounds of shrimp being prepared every day for sampling.

Scarecrow Fest

St. Charles, Illinois
For more than 25 years, St. Charles has hosted this beloved Scarecrow Fest. Each year, attendees choose from more than 150 entries to crown the winner of the Scarecrow Contest, which breaks down into six categories. Entering its 30th year this October, the weekend-long festival includes two stages of live entertainment, make-your-own scarecrow stations, a carnival and the Autumn on the Fox Arts & Craft Show. Admission, parking and trolleys are all free during the St. Charles festival, which is located just an hour west of Chicago along the Fox River.

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Marlboro Music Festival

Marlboro, Vermont
This five-week concert series held throughout July and August features performances by established musicians as well as young professionals coming out of the Marlboro Music School. Performances take place on select Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons, and only one quarter of the more than 250 pieces played during the three-week rehearsal period leading up to the festival are presented to audiences. For more than 60 years, visitors from across the country have attended the festival to hear these talented performers make music.

Barbecue Festival ISTOCK

Barbecue Festival

Lexington, North Carolina
Held along nine blocks of Uptown Lexington's Main Street, this annual Barbecue Festival drew an estimated 200,000 people in 2014. Since its start in 1984, the festival has celebrated Lexington, the self-proclaimed Barbecue Capital of the World, and its famous slow-cooked and smoky pork shoulders dipped in a vinegar mixture. The fest is made up of more than 400 exhibitors (selling crafts and food) and a number of special activities — in the past, visitors have enjoyed a bicycle stunt show, rock climbing wall and an antique car show. The festival is typically held during one of the last two weekends of October.

American Folk Festival

Bangor, Maine
Held along the waterfront, the American Folk Festival draws more than 90,000 visitors each year. The three-day festival incorporates music and dance performances from a variety of different regions, cultures and heritages. Along with craft demonstrations, a children's area, food vendors and a marketplace with hand-made creations, the festival also has workshops, where artists who share a similar instrument or tradition take the stage together to perform and discuss their music.

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Isles confident heading into playoffs

The banged-up Islanders begin their series with Florida tonight.

DENIS GORMAN
@DenisGorman
sports@metro.us

Casey Stengel is widely credited with asking, "Can't anybody here play this game?" during the New York Mets' inglorious, inaugural 1962 season.

Forgive Jack Capuano if he looks at the 2015-16 Islanders team and wonders to himself, "Can't anybody here play?"

As his team readies for a first-round series against the Atlantic Division champion Florida Panthers, Capuano's Islanders are a collection of the walking wounded.

"We have some bumps and bruises," Capuano said last week as the team finished its 100-point regular season with a 45-27-10 record.

That is the positive.

The negative is that the Islanders iced a lineup against the Sabres that lacked Jaroslav Halak, Travis Hamonic, Mikhail Grabovski, Cal Clutterbuck and Matt Martin among regulars. Clutterbuck and Martin did play in the regular season finale and should dress for Game 1 Thursday (8 p.m., CNBC) at the BB&T Center.

Halak won't play in the series, as he recuperates from a lower-body injury that's suspected to be a torn groin sustained in a 2-1 win over the Penguins on Mar. 8 at CONSOL Energy Center. It is believed the earliest Halak could return would be the second round.

Without their No. 1 goaltender, the Islanders have had to make due with backup Thomas Greiss, and prospects J-F Berube and Christopher Gibson. It is likely that Greiss will be the playoff starter and Gibson will be the backup, as Berube is dealing with an injury of his own.

The Islanders have a long list of injured players but still like their chances against Florida. GETTY IMAGES

Undoubtedly, the loss of Halak is significant. So, too, is that of Hamonic.

The Islanders lost Hamonic in the first period of a win over the Blue Jackets in March following a collision with Scott Hartnell. The team has not disclosed the severity of the injury other than Capuano having told reporters that it's not good. However, Hamonic skated at the Islanders' training facility in Syosset on Saturday morning, but Capuano was unsure if the defenseman could play against the Panthers.

"I don't know. It's a matter of how he feels and what the doctors say," Capuano said. "We still have some time before … whenever the playoffs open up. I'm hopeful there's a chance he can play."

Following the game Sunday, Capuano reiterated his position.

"We'll see how he skates," Capuano said. "He has skated the past couple days. Again, we want to make sure he is 100 percent and that he is ready to go before we make that decision."

Despite the injury woes, the Islanders are a confident group.

"We've been playing well in these last couple weeks," Clutterbuck said after Sunday's season finale. "We had to win some big games coming down the stretch and we did that. I think we're [heading] in the right direction [and I'm] always confident in our group."

The Islanders did not practice Monday, but the team announced defenseman Scott Mayfield was returned to AHL Bridgeport. The league announced John Tavares was named the First Star of the Week after recording four goals and five assists for nine points in four games.

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Giants draft options at No. 10 overall

A look at three players the G-Men are highly interested in.

TONY WILLIAMS
@TBone8
sports@metro.us

The Giants are already into their offseason conditioning program, which means for the guys already on the roster, they can officially put last season's dreadful season in the rearview mirror.

As for the upcoming draft later this month, Big Blue's brass is in the final stretch of player evaluations and big-board rankings. General manager Jerry Reese was busy at the onset of free agency, reloading a defense that was historically bad. While he spent more than $200 million in upgrades, it doesn't mean he's finished with the facelift.

The offense has been ignored a bit during this offseason, which also means anyone is in play when the team selects 10th overall on April 28.

Here's a look at three players likely to be available:

Florida cornerback Vernon Hargreaves should be available at No. 10. GETTY IMAGES

1 Jack Conklin, OT, Michigan State

Conklin will likely still be there at No. 10 as, depending on the ranking system, he's either the second- or third-best tackle prospect. He'd be a very good — if not safe — selection for Reese. But being a top-10 selector, Reese cannot afford a mistake. Conklin, though, is not only a safe pick — and would fill a huge need at right tackle — but he would be the nasty bookend worthy enough to play opposite the very nasty Ereck Flowers.

2 Vernon Hargreaves, CB, Florida

He's the cleanest cover corner in the draft and may be the second-best defensive back prospect, behind Florida State's Jalen Ramsey. Since the Giants still have Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie and the newly inked Janoris Jenkins, Hargreaves would instantly be slotted into the nickel package and be an improvement over whatever the Giants threw out there last season. Hargreaves is a legit top-10 pick who earned first-team All-SEC honors in all three of his seasons in Gainesville. And Reeves likes adding star players from major conferences, so he fits the bill.

3 Laquon Treadwell, WR, Mississippi

He's an interesting prospect, as many pundits are torn about his potential. Some may think No. 10 is too high for a possession receiver, while others believe he's the perfect — and polished — complement to Odell Beckham Jr. Throw in the fact that like quarterback Eli Manning, he's a fellow Ole Miss star, and the chemistry may be a hit right off the bat — just like the Manning-to-Beckham connection has been.

Big Blue notes:

- The Giants have upgraded their weight room, and so far it's been a hit with the players. "There's definitely some cool things going on in the new weight room," said guard Justin Pugh.
- During the Phase 1 of the offseason program, offense and defense aren't allowed to go against one another. This maiden session is only for weight training, rehabbing, and conditioning.
- Since the Giants have a new head coach, they can have an extra minicamp which they will later this month.
- The team announced the signings of linebacker Kelvin Sheppard, offensive lineman Byron Stingily and running back Bobby Rainey.

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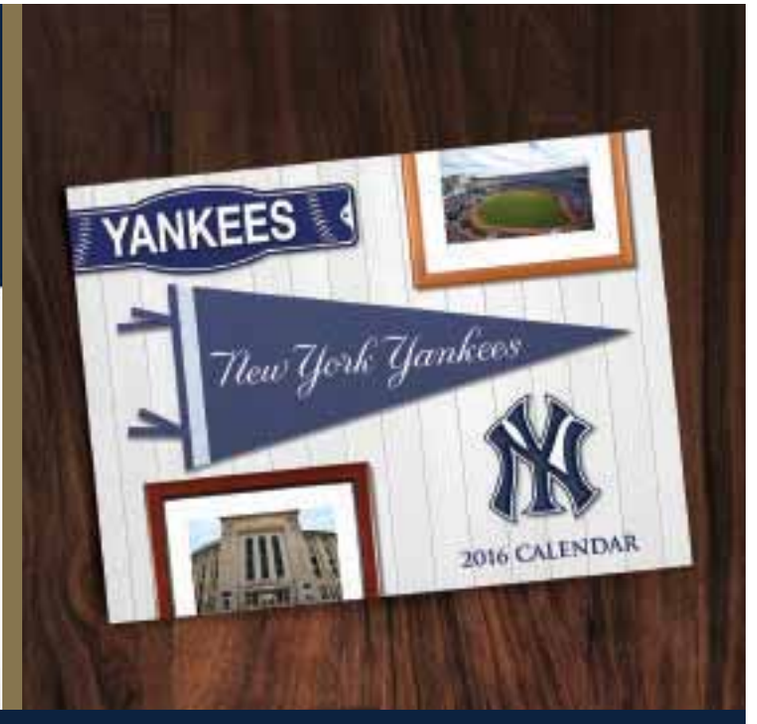

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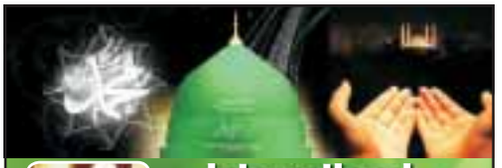

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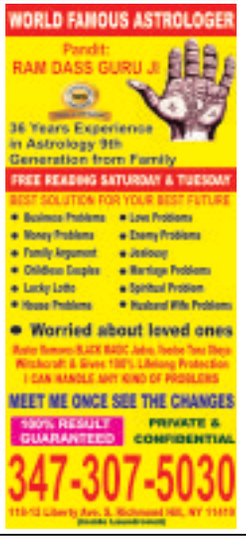

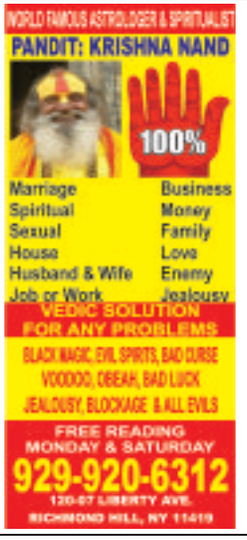

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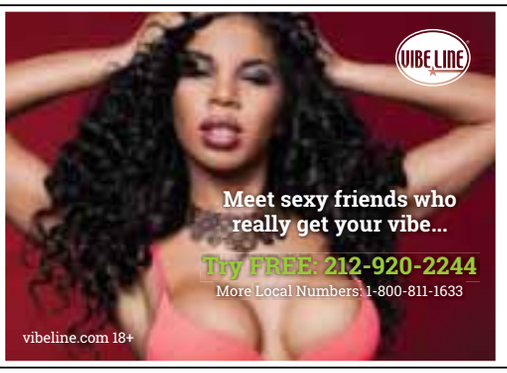

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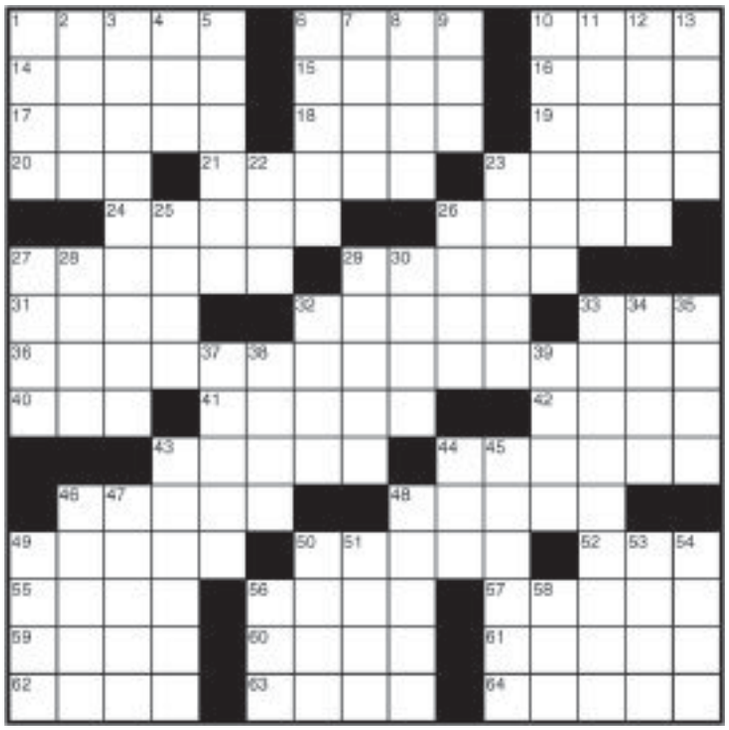

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6 Hecklers' chorus
10 Chicken feed
14 Kind of drum
15 Whodunit terrier
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46 Clamps
47 Helen, in Spanish
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50 Wisecrack
51 Reverse
53 "— Too Proud to Beg"
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56 Winter ailment
58 Yes, to Rob Roy

metro.us/games

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easy

	8							
2			5	3	4		1	
3	6		1	7				4
6						3		
5	4			1			2	7
		7						1
1				8	3		7	2
	5		6	9	2			8
							3	

hard

6					3		7	
	8	5	7	1	9			
9				2				
7	6				5		4	
		8				3		
	5		9				6	2
				5				4
			8	4	7	2	9	
	4		6					8

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Explore your talents. Sign up for a course that will help you develop a strategy to turn an enjoyable hobby into a profitable enterprise. Share your life's ambition with a loved one.

Taurus Make changes at home that will ease stress and make your life simpler. You'll be inspired to use the extra time you have to do something that brings you happiness.

Gemini Reneging on a promise will leave you in a precarious position. Have something ready to offer in place of your original plan to avoid damaging your reputation.

Cancer Don't let your impulses call the shots. If something doesn't seem right, keep a close watch and quietly protect against any sort of personal loss. Be patient.

Leo Look for alternate routes if you see too much negativity, baggage or debris in your way. Make subtle changes that you know are doable and are easy to implement without detection.

Virgo Take in as much information as possible. Get involved in events and discussions that will lead to introductions to people who can help you achieve your dream.

Libra Don't let an emotional situation keep you from doing something you want to do. Someone will try to manipulate you if you show confusion or insecurity. Put an end to being controlled.

Scorpio Take an inside look at what you are dealing with and who is behind any opposition. Go directly to the source and apply your magnetic personality to get approval.

Sagittarius You need to put yourself first. Make changes that will bring convenience and order to your life. Let go of dead weight and focus on what you can accomplish.

Capricorn Make sure you have everything in order. It will be difficult to deal with medical, emotional and joint financial matters if you have neglected personal business.

Aquarius Plan a day of fun with a friend, children or a loved one. Keeping active will help you stay in shape and boost your confidence. Romance is encouraged.

Pisces Do your research before you make a change that will affect your looks or income. An expert will offer you options that better suit your needs. **EUGENIA LAST**

Yesterday's answers

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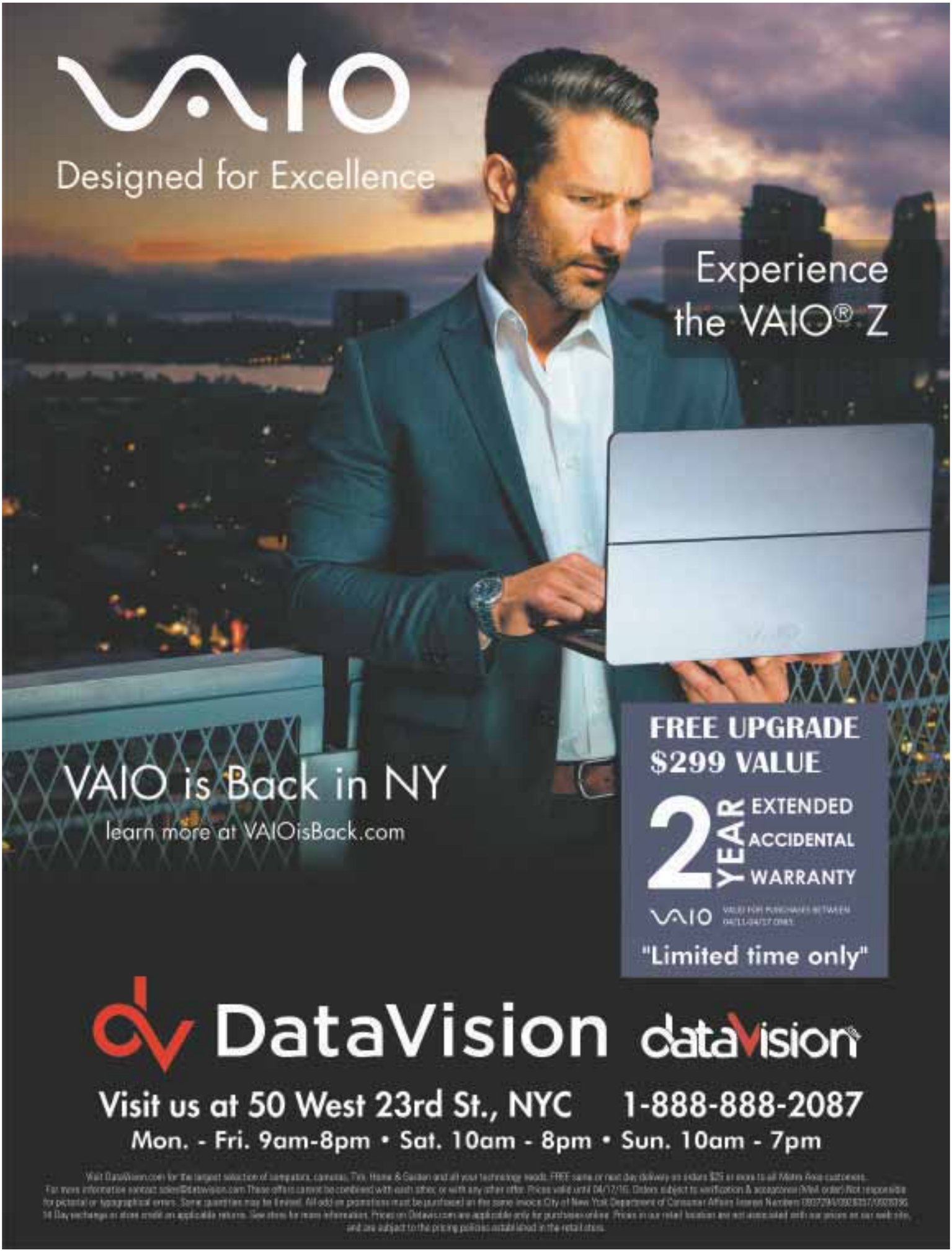
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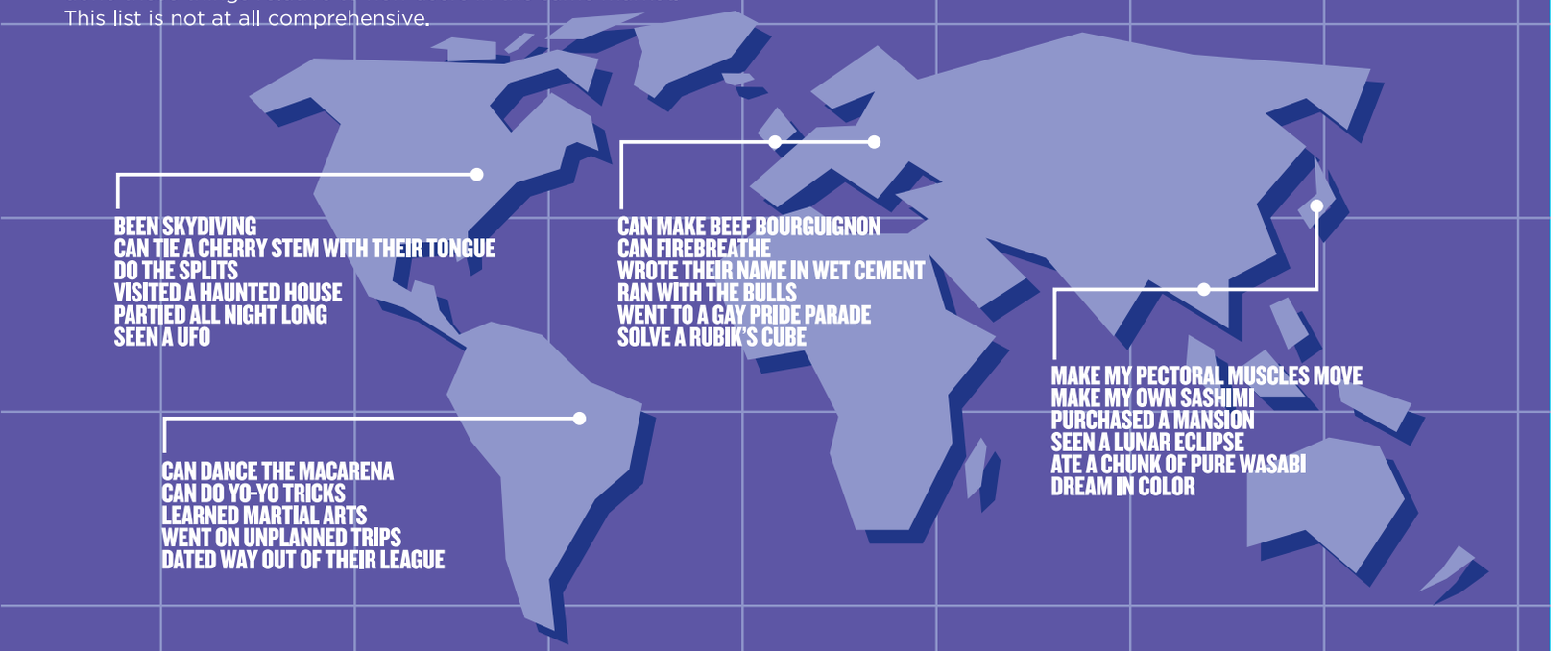
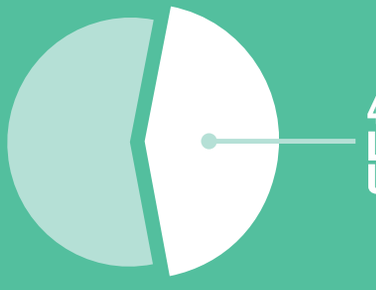
THE ENTIRE BOLD WORLD

LISTERINE® users around the world are more likely to do/have done these things relative to non-users in the same market. This list is not at all comprehensive.


BEEN SKYDIVING
CAN TIE A CHERRY STEM WITH THEIR TONGUE
DO THE SPLITS
VISITED A HAUNTED HOUSE
PARTIED ALL NIGHT LONG
SEEN A UFO
CAN MAKE BEEF BOURGUIGNON
CAN FIREBREATHE
WROTE THEIR NAME IN WET CEMENT
RAN WITH THE BULLS
WENT TO A GAY PRIDE PARADE
SOLVE A RUBIK'S CUBE
MAKE MY PECTORAL MUSCLES MOVE
MAKE MY OWN SASHIMI
PURCHASED A MANSION
SEEN A LUNAR ECLIPSE
ATE A CHUNK OF PURE WASABI
DREAM IN COLOR
CAN DANCE THE MACARENA
CAN DO YO-YO TRICKS
LEARNED MARTIAL ARTS
WENT ON UNPLANNED TRIPS
DATED WAY OUT OF THEIR LEAGUE



40% OF LISTERINE® USERS

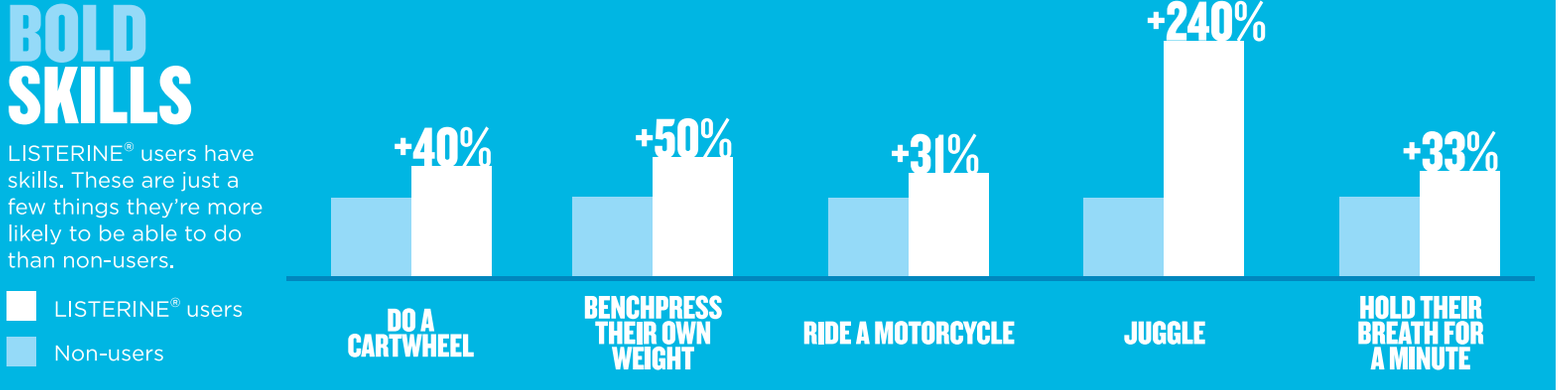
40% OF LISTERINE® USERS HAVE STOOD UP TO A BULLY. THAT'S 8% MORE THAN NON-USERS.

LISTERINE® MOUTHWASH USERS THINK THEY READ MORE

They'd read this: the STUDY OF BOLD results presented in this newspaper are true to a 95% statistical confidence. Markets surveyed include US, UK, Germany, Thailand, Japan, and Brazil. The survey was fielded online, conducted from August–September, 2015, in the six major markets. It had a sample size of 6000, with 1000 in each of the markets, with 50% LISTERINE® users (past 12 months) and 50% lapsed or non-users. Each group also had equal parts men and women with a wide distribution of ages. The STUDY OF BOLD is on-going, and we expect more data in future studies. That's bold.

BOLD SKILLS

LISTERINE® users have skills. These are just a few things they're more likely to be able to do than non-users.



The STUDY OF BOLD findings are based on self-reported data from a consumer survey conducted in US, UK, Germany, Brazil, Thailand and Japan. LISTERINE® mouthwash user statements apply to certain countries.

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